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(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98/03145 (22) International Filing Date: 19 February 1998 (19.02.98) (30) Priority Data: 08/805,134 24 February 1997 (24.02.97) US (71) Applicant: REALTIME MEDIA, INC. [US/US]; 516 Prescott Road, Merion, PA 19066 (US). (72) Inventors: AUXIER, Robert; 2409 Pondside Terrace, Silver Spring, MD 20906 (US). SEIDMAN, Charles, B.; 516 Prescott Road, Merion, PA 19066 (US). KHERA, Vivek; 15445 Indianola Drive, Rockville, MD 20855 (US). (74) Agents: BAILEY, Matthew, T. et al.; Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, 1800 M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036 (US).	(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, GH, GM, GW, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i> <i>With amended claims.</i>	

(54) Title: INTERNET SCRATCH-OFF GAME

(57) Abstract

A scratch-off game card image (65-66) is presented on web pages of participating sites in the form of a super-imposed dual image responsive to a browser's cursor movement (67) such that when a browser is authorized (62), movement of the cursor over the dual image causes the dominant image to dissolve and reveal the secondary image which contains the numbers or symbols used by the scratch-off game. When a scratch-off image card contains a winning combination of symbols, the act of the browser scratching off the covering image to reveal the secondary image automatically advances the browser through routines which enable the browser to receive the prize or credits awarded based on the secondary image of the card image (68).

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graph TD
    61[PLAYER ENTERS PERSONAL DATA] --> 62[CONTEST MANAGEMENT VERIFIES PLAYER DATA]
    62 --> 63[CONTEST MANAGEMENT GENERATES RANDOM GAMING SYMBOLS]
    63 --> 64[CONTEST MANAGEMENT DETERMINES IF PLAYER IS A WINNER]
    64 --> 65[CONTEST MANAGEMENT GENERATES SCRATCH-OFF GAME CARD GAMING SYMBOLS IMAGE FILE]
    65 --> 66[CONTEST MANAGEMENT SENDS GAME CARD COVER AND GAME CARD GAMING IMAGE SYMBOLS FILES]
    66 --> 67[PLAYER SCRATCHES OFF GAME CARD COVER]
    67 --> 68[CONTEST MANAGEMENT PROCESSES PLAYER PRIZE]
          
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INTERNET SCRATCH-OFF GAME

Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to an internet version of scratch-off games of the type wherein a player removes a portion of an image to expose gaming symbols, the matching of which determines a win.

Background of the Invention

10 A multitude of scratch-off gaming cards are presently available through retail outlets such as convenience stores. Such games have meet with great success and developed a following of dedicated players as well as casual players. However, to participate in the games, players have to travel to a retail source of game cards.

Objectives of the Invention

15 It is a primary objective of the present invention to provide scratch-off gaming via an electronic media.

Another objective of the invention is to provide scratch-off game cards as electronically produced images transmitted over the Internet.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

20 The image of A scratch-off game card displayed on an internet Web page is created by generating a game image which includes one or more alphanumerics and/or symbols which comprise a classical scratch-off matching game. The areas containing the game elements are replaced or covered by a second image which obscures the gaming elements
25 which may or may not be present as subliminal portions of the basic game card. A

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browser player determines if the scratch-off game card represents a win by dragging the cursor over the sections of the card image which hide the gaming areas. This action removes the screening image or initiates the image of the gaming symbols to give the player the impression that his or her action with the courser is removing a covering from the symbols. In the best mode of practicing the invention, the gaming alphanumerics and/or symbols are created by a random number generator mechanism. The foregoing and other objectives and features of the invention will become more readily apparent from the detailed description of the preferred and best mode of practicing the invention which follows and is supported by the accompanying drawings, wherein:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a process flow chart illustrating the functional sequence used to implement a preferred embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a simulation of a typical preliminary game player registration internet Web page used in practicing the invention.

Figure 3 illustrates the interactive hyperlink structure bringing about the invention.

Figure 4 is an exemplary internet Web page containing a typical game card partially scratched off.

Figure 5 illustrates the progression of a typical scratch-off game.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

In the best mode of practicing the invention, an image of a scratch-off game card is derived from an internet source and displayed on a browser's terminal. The game card image contains gaining alphanumerics and/or symbols created by a random number generator mechanism. At the game provider source, a cover image is superimposed over

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at least the portions of the game card containing the randomly generated gaming elements and the merged images are supplied as an internet web page. When a game play is authorized, the pair of superimposed images in an appropriate image file are transmitted to a selected player on the internet. The randomly generated gaming elements are not generated until an internet browser elects to play the game and meets any predetermined prerequisites. When the game card is created, the win/no-win status of the card is known by the provider but the browser is not aware of the gaming elements. Movement of the browser's cursor across the browser's screen is read over the external link coupling the browser's web page display to the game card cover image file and creates a permanent window by deleting the portion of the cover image file as the cursor is moved around various coordinates of the file. Thus portions of the underlying superimposed image from the game card file are exposed. Alternately, the cursor movement paints the gaming images to create an identical effect for the player. The game provider has previously determined if the thus exposed portions of the image game card constitute a winning selection and the browser's cursor movements simply advise the game provider that the browser is playing. If the uncovered portions of the image game card represent a winning selection and the browser was certified as a bona fide contestant, the browser is advised and the browser's account is appropriately credited or if an actual prize rather than a credit is being awarded, an e-mail message identifying the winning browser is transmitted to the prize supplier so that the appropriate prize may be shipped to the browser.

The functional sequence used to implement a preferred embodiment of the best mode for practicing the invention is illustrated by Figure 1. An internet browser is lead to the advertising banner 10 as a normal browsing function on the internet or hyperlinked by a participating advertiser. Game identification and selected sponsor logos follow the advertising banner in a program box 11 which includes pointers 12 (hyperlinks) that

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transport a browser and prospective game player to web pages which include game related information such as instructions for playing the game 14, a list of prizes 15, rules which govern play 16 and a list of participating sponsors 17.

5 Upon reaching the first group of hyperlink pointers 12, a perspective player typically elects to jump to the "Prizes" Web page 15. The list entices the player to investigate further by using a browser to jump back to the Web page containing the program box 11 to check the "How to Play" Web page 14 and occasionally the "Rules & Regulations" Web page 15, jumping back to the program box 11 after each Web page is investigated. If sufficiently motivated, a perspective player may select the demo game pointer 18 which hyperlinks the player to a demonstration game Web page 19. This Web page is identical in appearance to an actual game Web page 20. It automatically links the player to the demonstration scratch-off game card 21 which is identical to an actual game card 22.

10 In the preferred embodiment, the "How to Play" Web page 14 begins with an introduction such as "HOW DO SHOPPERS PLAY?", followed by the following instructions in a typical application:

IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A WALLET:

20 Visit any of the Participating CyberCash Merchant sites

Make a transaction with your CyberCash Wallet using the Credit Card or Cybercoin service(s).

Go into your CyberCash Wallet and select the Transaction Log in your Wallet.

25 Make note of the "Order ID Number" to get your free game play. (Cut & Paste)

- 5 -

Select the "CLICK HERE TO PLAY" button at the Point-of-Sale Web page! ... and Play!

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A WALLET:

- 5 Select the CyberCash Wallet Button on the CyberCash site
 (www.cybercash.com) or the program Web page
 (www.cybercash.com/sweepstakes).
- Download the CyberCash Wallet & quickly install.
- Create a User ID and bind a credit card and/or checking account,
- 10 * (You can download money from your credit card to use with Cybercoin
 Service.)
- * (Bank verification for your checking account, may take up to 3 business
 days)
- Visit any of the Sweepstakes Participating CyberCash Merchant sites.
- 15 Use your Wallet to make a transaction using CyberCash Credit or
 Cybercoin service.
- After successful transaction, go into your CyberCash Wallet and select the
 Transaction Log in your Wallet.
- Make note of the "Order ID Number" to get your free game play or ... (Cut
20 & Past the number)
- Select the "CLICK HERE TO PLAY" button at the Point-of-Sale Web
 page!

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HOW TO PLAY THE GAME? (NON Java Enabled Browsers)

Enter your E-Mail Address, CyberCash ID #, and order ID

Then, select "I Agree to Play".

A new window will appear displaying your prize amounts.

5 Match three (3) like prizes, and win that prize!

HOW TO PLAY THE GAME? (Java Enabled Browsers)

Enter your E-Mail Address, CyberCash ID #, and Order ID #

Then, select "I Agree to Play".

10 A new window will appear displaying your game card.

Using your mouse and pointer, "scratch" the boxes on the game card to
reveal the prizes.

Match three (3) like prizes, and win that prize!

15 **HOW MANY TIMES CAN I PLAY?**

You can play one (1) time per one (1) successful CyberCash transaction.

HOW DO I GET MY PRIZE?

20 Participant will be requested to complete an "Eligibility Release Form",
upon receiving a winning game card.

Prizes will be mailed or shipped to information provided on Form.

Make sure the information you enter for your game play is accurate! If
not, send an E-mail with your updated information to
ccpromo@prizes.com.

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SUMMARY OF RULES

Players must be at least 18 years or older.

No Purchase Necessary (See Official Rules for alternative means of entry).

All federal, state and local laws apply. Void where prohibited by law.

Void in the state of Florida until November 10 1996

Game is void in Province of Quebec in Canada.

Participant information must be true and correct. False information may
result in disqualification from game.

The following rules and regulations are presented by the "Rules and Regulations"
Web page 16:

1. NO PURCHASE OR TRANSACTION NECESSARY TO PLAY: The
CyberCash Instant win Game and Sweepstakes #CCSGOO1 begins at 12:01 am
EST, November 1, 1996, and ends at 11:59 pm ET on December 31, 1996 or upon
the play and completion of all 40,000 game tickets, whichever occurs first.
2. ELIGIBILITY: Game is only open to legal residents of the United States and
Canada at least 18 years old, Employees and directors of RealTIME MEDIA
(RTM), CyberCash, Yahoo, Softbank, First Union, Khera Communications,
participating sponsors, participating merchant web sites, information providers,
sysops, gameops, software developers, content providers, their affiliates
subsidiaries, advertisers, advertising agencies, promotional and marketing
agencies, and their' immediate families (and those living in their same households)
are ineligible. By participating you agree to these official rules and to the

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decisions of the judges which are final and binding in all respects. The Instant Win Game & Sweepstakes is void in the Province of Quebec in Canada, void in the state of Florida until November 25, 1996, and where prohibited by law.

- 5 3. HOW TO PLAY: You may play the instant win game by accessing sponsors Internet address at <http://www.cybercash.com> for a list of participating Merchants URL's Web addresses. When you complete a transaction by using your CyberCash Wallet or Cybercoin you will be presented with a unique transaction number. Record this number as you will need to enter it into a Held to play the
- 10 instant game. You will then be presented with an Instant Win Game Card containing representations of a total of 6 prize boxes, You will be instructed to enter your full name. E-mail address, CyberCash ID and unique transaction number in the fields provided and select "the I Agree to Play" switch. You will then scratch off (with mouse) the graphic image covering the 6 prize boxes to
- 15 reveal the prizes. If you do not have the Java browser, software enabling you to view the Graphic covering, you will immediately be presented with the complete game card and the prizes. If you match exactly three (3) of the same prizes you win that prize subject to verification.
- 20 4. SWEEPSTAKES and SECOND CHANCE DRAWING: For each game play you complete whether by Internet or by the alternate means of entry you will be automatically entered into a database for the \$10,000 Cash Grand Prize and any other unclaimed prizes from the instant portion of the game. Winner(s) will be selected in an electronic randomized drawing on or about January 15, 1997. The
- 25 Grand Prize sweepstakes winner and any other winners remaining from the instant

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portion of this game will be notified by electronic mail E-mail or postal mail.

Odds of winning cash grand prize depend on the number of eligible entries but can not exceed 1: 40,000. Odds of winning unclaimed instant win game prizes depend on the number of eligible entries and number 0 unclaimed remaining instant win prizes can not exceed 1: 40,000.

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5. ALTERNATE MEANS OF ENTRY: To Enter without purchase or transaction legibly print your name, complete address, E-mail address (optional), zip code, and daytime telephone number on a 3 inch x 5 inch piece of paper and mail to: "Cybercoin Free Play Request", P.O. Box 4613 Philadelphia, PA 19127 USA. Game play requests must be postmarked by December 31 1996 and received by January 7, 1997. Limit one entry per person per day and each entry must be mailed in a separately stamped envelope. RTM official personnel will play one (1) free instant win Game on your behalf per entry received. Only winners will be notified by electronic mail, or regular postal mail, No photocopies, reproductions or facsimiles allowed. Sponsor is not responsible for late lost, illegible, incomplete, stolen, misdirected, or postage due mail.
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6. PRIZES AVAILABLE and ODDS OF WINNING: The overall odds of obtaining a winning game card are based on random selection of 40,000 game cards are: 1:123. Number of prizes and odds of winning prizes of different values are as follows: (5) \$500 are 1: 8000; (25) \$100 are 1:1600; (2) Sony TV's (approximate retail value \$400) are 1: 20,000; (4) Sony CD Discman (approximate retail value \$200) are 1: 10,000; (10) Sony Walkman (approximate retail value \$57) are 4000; (280) assorted Softbank, Yahoo & CyberCash t-shirts (approximate retail value \$
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10) are 1: 143. Prizes will only be awarded upon winner validation and verification by RTM.

- 5 7. PRIZE AWARDING: Sponsor reserves the right to substitute any non cash prize of equal or greater value for prizes that become unavailable. If any potential winner is a Canadian resident prior to the award of the prize, winner must correctly answer a mathematical skill question without either human or mechanical aid, By acceptance of a prizes, where lawful, winner consents 10 these of his/her name, likeness, voice, picture, and or sobriquet name without further consideration for advertising or promotional purposes. Prize winners may be required to execute and return an affidavit of eligibility and liability release and where lawful publicity release within 21 days of notification. Non-compliance, or if prize or prize notification is returned as undeliverable may result in forfeiture of prize. By accepting prize, winner agrees that Sponsor, it's parents, affiliates, and 15 related companies, and their respective officers, directors, employees, representatives and agents are not responsible and will be held harmless by winner against, for any loss or damage to person or property due in whole or in part directly or indirectly to possession, acceptance, use or misuse of any prize in this Game, or participation in this promotion.

- 20 8. WINNERS LIST: List of major prize winners in the instant Winner Game and Sweepstakes will be posted in the "Winners Circle" section located at: <http://www.cybercash.com>, winners names will appear for a minimum of 30 days after contest ends. Thereafter, a winners' list will only be available by sending an 25 E-mail "Winners List Request" to ccpromo@prizes.com, or by sending a self

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address stamped envelope for receipt by Jan 7, 1997 to: "CyberCoin Winners List, Request", P.O. Box 4613 Philadelphia, PA 19127 USA. Please specify CyberCash game number, along with your E-mail address.

- 5 9. DISQUALIFICATION: Sponsor is not responsible for lost, interrupted or
unavailable network server or other connections, miscommunications, failed
phone or computer or telephone transmissions or technical failure, jumbled,
scramble or misdirected transmission or other error of any kind, whether human,
mechanical or electronic. Persons found tampering with the Game will be
10 disqualified. If disqualified, Sponsor reserves the right to terminate players
eligibility to play the game for any of the above abuses. In the event the game is
compromised by virus, bugs, non-authorized human intervention or other causes
beyond the control of Sponsor, which corrupts or impairs the administration,
security, fairness or proper play of the Game, Sponsor reserves the right in its sole
15 discretion to suspend or terminate the Internet portion of the Game and
sweepstakes but continue with the free alternate means of entry portion
10. TAX INFORMATION: All taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of the
winners

20 When an Internet browser becomes a player by making a purchase from a
participating merchant and/or otherwise entering the contest, the browser is hyperlinked
to the instant win sweepstakes Web page, 20 of Figure 1. Typically the Web page is
similar to Figure 2. It may differ as required by advertiser needs but it must have
25 provisions for obtaining player related data such as e-mail address 23 which enables the

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game provider to forward prizes; CyberCash Wallet ID number 24 which enables the game provider to deposit a prize in a player's account, debit a player/purchaser's account for an order or debit a player's account if it is not a free or premium gift game; and if the game is a premium for purchasing from a participating advertiser, the browser/purchaser's order number 25 to verify the purchase before authorizing a game. The supporting structural organization behind the preferred embodiment of the invention illustrated by Figure I is outlined by Figure 3 which demonstrates the underlying hyperlink structure bringing about the invention. Participating merchant home Web pages, 32, include a hyperlink pointer 33 which jumps browsers to the game details Web page, 34. This Web page includes program box 11 of Figure. I and the hyperlink pointers associated therewith. It may also include rotating or sequencing advertisements, 35 of Figure 3, for different participating merchants. The advertisement either part of a fixed or a sequencing list, are hyperlink pointers to participating merchants home Web pages which are hyperlinked to appropriate point of sales Web pages. A free game play hyperlink pointer 36 on participating merchant home Web pages or point of sales Web pages jumps the browser to the Instant Win Game Web page, 40, which is equivalent to the Instant Win Sweepstakes Web page 20 of Figure 1. The browser is instructed to enter his or her name, e-mail address, CyberCash ID number and Order/Transaction number generated when the sales leading to this jump was made. If the browser has no CyberCash Account, the "CyberCash" portion of the CyberCash ID number request serves as a hyperlink pointer to jump to the "How to Play" Web page which contains the following:

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IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A WALLET:

Select the CyberCash Wallet Button on the CyberCash site
(www.cybercash.com) or the program Web page
(www.cybercash.com/sweepstakes).

5

Download the CyberCash Wallet & quickly install.

Create a User ID and bind a credit card and/or checking account,

- * (You can download money from your credit card to use with Cybercoin Service.)

- * (Bank verification for your checking account, may take up to 3 business days)

10

Visit any of the Sweepstakes Participating CyberCash Merchant sites.

Use your Wallet to make a transaction using CyberCash Credit or
Cybercoin service.

After successful transaction, go into your CyberCash Wallet and select the
Transaction Log in your Wallet.

15

Make note of the "Order ID Number" to get your free game play or... (Cut
& Past the number)

Select the "CLICK HERE TO PLAY" button at the Point-of-Sale Web
page!

20

In a similar manner, if the browser makes a purchase at a participating merchant's
home Web page, the browser is asked how the purchase is to be paid for. If CyberCash is
selected and the browser has no account, the "CyberCash" portion of the CyberCash ID
number request serves as a hyperlink pointer to jump to the "How to Play" Web page at
the section containing "IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A WALLET:"

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When the "Instant Win Game" questions are answered, the data are verified by the game RealTIME MEDIA Contest Management 41. If the data supports a legitimate player, a game card is randomly generated, registered as a win or no-win card as appropriate according to the game rules. The game card is overlaid by a primary or covering image which masks the game card in the areas containing the numbers or symbols which constitute the variables of the scratch-off game and this composite is provided to the playing browser as A automatic hyperlinked Web page, 42 which appears as a typical conventional scratch-off game card, Figure 4, with instructions to scratch off certain sections by dragging the pointing cursor thereover to determine if the card is a winner. Only one complete mask 51 remains in the game card 50 illustrated in Figure 4. Four mask have been removed 52 and the cursor 53 is in the process of removing the fifth mask 54.

The scratch-off actions of the player triggers an E-mail message to the RealTIME MEDIA Contest Management 41 and the CyberCash Administrative Office 43. The RealTIME MEDIA Contest Management 41 directs the shipping of prizes to winners and the collection of release forms. The CyberCash Administrative Office 43 debits the appropriate participating merchant for the prize and credits the player's CyberCash account if appropriate.

In the best mode of practicing the invention, when a player enters the personal data and activates the "I Agree to Play" hyper-link pointer of Figure 2, the player's data is transmitted to the contest management site, 61 of Figure 5. Contest management verifies the player is a bonafide player based on the data, 62, and randomly generates the gaming symbols of a scratch-off game card, 63. The gaming symbols may be a single symbol or a set of symbols. At this point, contest management determines if the symbols randomly generated for the player are a winning group, 64.

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Contest management proceeds with the generation of the image file of the player's game card using any of a variety of well known image creation programs. In the preferred embodiment the image file is a GIF file (Compuserve Graphics Interchange Format) selected because it is optimized for electronic downloading and therefore faster than the higher quality JPEG files. The gaming symbols are merged into the basic game card static image and inserted into the Web page along with a GIF image file of the static game card with blank windows covering the areas of the game card which contain the gaming symbols. This is the cover image. The two game card images, gaming symbol image and cover image, are superimposed on the same area of the Web page and transmitted to the player, 66. also transmitted is a program which will enable a JAVA enabled terminal to selectively remove the cover image to expose the gaming symbols. If the receiving terminal is not JAVA enabled, the cover image will not be generated and the player will see only the gaming symbol image. If the receiving terminal is JAVA enabled, both images are displayed and the player cannot see the gaming symbols until the cursor is dragged over the areas of the cover image masking the symbols. As the cursor is dragged over these areas, 67, the cover image is deleted or erased to allow the player to see the underlying symbol image.

Contest management process the prize, 68, by crediting the players account or initiating the shipment of the won premium.

While preferred embodiments of this invention have been illustrated and described, variations and modifications may be apparent to those skilled in the art. The image files may differ and the gaming symbols may be any of a variety of images such as numbers, dollar amounts, premium images, etc. Therefore, we do not wish to be limited thereto and ask that the scope and breadth of this invention be determined from the claims which follow rather than the above description.

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What is claimed is:

CLAIM 1. A method for providing a scratch-off game via an electronic communications network, including the steps of: generating a random set of gaming symbols; merging said random set of gaming symbols into an image file of a scratch-off game card to create a game card image file; inserting said game card image file into a scratch-off game web page; inserting a cover image file into said web page at the same location as said game card image whereby said cover image masks said game card image when said scratch-off game web page is displayed; and erasing said cover image to expose said game card image by dragging a terminal display cursor over said web page display of said superimposed game card and cover images.

CLAIM 2. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 1, including the further steps of: determining if a player is an authorized player by matching player provided data with a previously collected data file; evaluating said random set of gaming symbols according to a previously determined criterion; and awarding a prize when said criterion are met.

CLAIM 3. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 2, wherein said step of determining if a player is an authorized player by matching player provided data with a previously collected data file includes the step of determining if said player has completed a transaction with a participating supplier.

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CLAIM 4. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 2, wherein said step of determining if a player is an authorized player by matching player provided data with a previously collected data file includes the step of determining if said player has been forwarded to said scratch-off game web page by a participating supplier.

CLAIM 5. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 4, wherein said step of determining if said player has been forwarded to said scratch-off game web page by a participating supplier includes the step of comparing player provided transaction data with participating supplier transaction data.

CLAIM 6. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 2, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes posting a prize credit to said players account.

CLAIM 7. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 2, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes shipping a prize premium to said player.

CLAIM 8. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 3, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes posting a prize credit to said players account.

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CLAIM 9. A method for providing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 3, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes shipping a prize premium to said player.

CLAIM 10. A method for playing a scratch-off game via an interactive communications network, including the steps of:
signaling a game provider of a player's intent to participate in a scratch-off game:
5 generating a random set of gaming symbols; merging said random set of gaming symbols into an image file of a scratch-off game card to create a game card image file; inserting said game card image file into a scratch-off game web page; inserting a cover image file into said web page at the same location as said game card image whereby said cover image masks said
10 game card image when said scratch-off game web page is displayed; and erasing said cover image to expose said game card image by dragging a terminal display cursor over said web page display of said superimposed game card and cover images.

CLAIM 11. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 10, including the further steps of:
determining if said player is an authorized player matching player provided data with a previously collected data file;
5 evaluating said random set of gaming symbol according to a previously determined criterion; and
awarding a prize when said criterion are met.

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CLAIM 12. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 11, wherein said step of determining if a player is an authorized player by matching player provided data with a previously collected data file includes the step of determining if said player has completed a transaction with a participating supplier.

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CLAIM 13. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 11, wherein said step of determining if a player is an authorized player by matching player provided data with a previously collected data file includes the step of determining if said player has been forwarded to said scratch-off game web page by a participating supplier.

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CLAIM 14. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 13, wherein said step of determining if said player has been forwarded to said scratch-off game web page by a participating supplier includes the step of comparing player provided transaction data with participating supplier transaction data.

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CLAIM 15. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 11, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes posting a prize credit to said players account.

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CLAIM 16. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 11, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes shipping a prize premium to said player.

CLAIM 17. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 12, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes posting a prize credit to said players account.

CLAIM 18. A method for playing a scratch-off game as defined by Claim 12, wherein said step of awarding a prize includes shipping a prize premium to said player.

AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 29 July 1998 (29.07.98);
original claims 1-18 replaced by new claims 1-21 (6 pages)]

1. A method for providing an interactive game via an electronic communications network implementing a hypertext transfer protocol, including the steps of:
 - (1) receiving information identifying a set of gaming symbol images;
 - (2) displaying a set of secondary images on a display screen, each secondary image in said set of secondary images corresponding to one or more gaming symbol images in said set of gaming symbol images; and
 - (3) replacing at least a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.
2. The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving step includes the step of receiving information identifying a set of images of randomly generated gaming symbols.
3. The method of claim 19, wherein the receiving step includes the step of receiving a set of gaming symbol images.
4. The method of claim 21, wherein the receiving step includes the step of receiving a set of gaming symbol images in a GIF format.

5. The method of claim 19, wherein the displaying step includes the step of displaying a set of secondary images at assigned positions within an image of a game card.

6. The method of claim 19, wherein the replacing step includes the step of replacing only a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.

7. A method for providing an interactive game via an electronic communications network, including the steps of:

- (1) transmitting information identifying a set of gaming symbol images to a receiving terminal; and
- (2) transmitting computer program logic to said receiving terminal for storage on a computer usable medium in said receiving terminal, said computer program logic including
 - first means for enabling a processor in said receiving terminal to display a set of secondary images on a display screen, each secondary image in said set of secondary images corresponding to one or more gaming symbol images in said set of gaming symbol images; and
 - second means for enabling said processor in said receiving terminal to replace at least a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is

identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.

8. The method of claim 25, wherein the transmitting information step includes the step of transmitting information identifying a set of images of randomly generated gaming symbols.
9. The method of claim 25, wherein the transmitting information step includes the step of transmitting a set of gaming symbol images.
10. The method of claim 27, wherein the transmitting information step includes the step of transmitting a set of gaming symbol images in a GIF format.
11. The method of claim 25, wherein the transmitting computer program logic step includes the step of transmitting computer program logic to said receiving terminal, wherein said computer program logic is a Java program.
12. The method of claim 25, wherein said first means enables said processor in said receiving terminal to display a set of secondary images at assigned positions within an image of a game card.

13. The method of claim 25, said second means enables said processor in said receiving terminal to replace only a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.

14. The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of initiating the scratch-off game upon the receipt of a request from said receiving terminal using a hyperlink pointer.

15. A method for providing an interactive game via an electronic communications network, including the steps of:

- (1) generating information identifying a set of gaming symbols;
- (2) transmitting information identifying a set of gaming symbol images to a receiving terminal;
- (3) transmitting computer program logic to said receiving terminal for storage on a computer usable medium in said receiving terminal, said computer program logic enabling a processor in said receiving terminal to implement the scratch-off game;
- (4) displaying a set of secondary images on a display screen, each secondary image in said set of secondary images corresponding to one or more gaming symbol images in said set of gaming symbol images; and

(5) replacing at least a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.

16. The method of claim 33, wherein the generation step includes the step of generating information identifying a set of randomly generated gaming symbols.

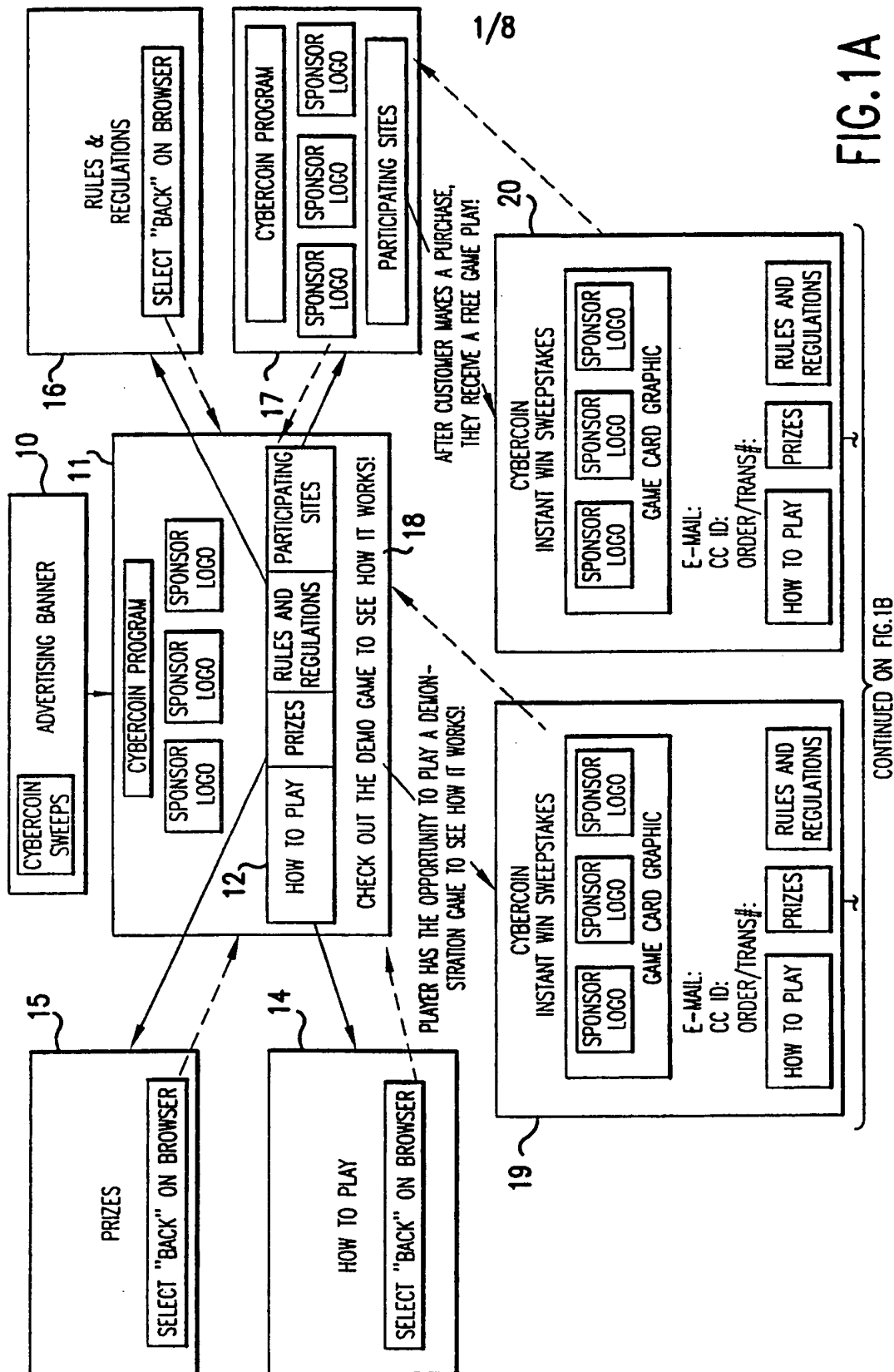
17. The method of claim 33, wherein the transmitting information step includes the step of transmitting a set of gaming symbol images to said receiving terminal.

18. The method of claim 35, wherein the transmitting information step includes the step of transmitting a set of gaming symbol images to said receiving terminal in a GIF format.

19. The method of claim 33, wherein the transmitting computer program logic includes the step of transmitting computer program logic to said receiving terminal, wherein said computer program logic is a Java program.

20. The method of claim 33, wherein the displaying step includes the step of displaying a set of secondary images at assigned positions within an image of a game card.

21. The method of claim 33, wherein the replacing step includes the step of replacing only a portion of a secondary image on said display screen that is identified by movement in a cursor position with a corresponding portion of a gaming symbol image.



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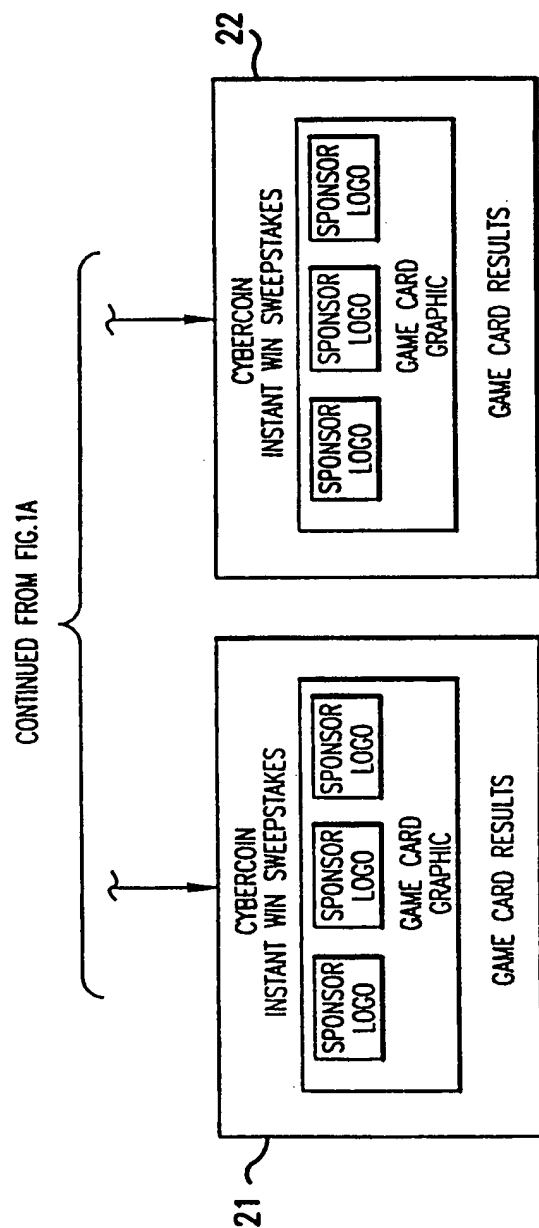


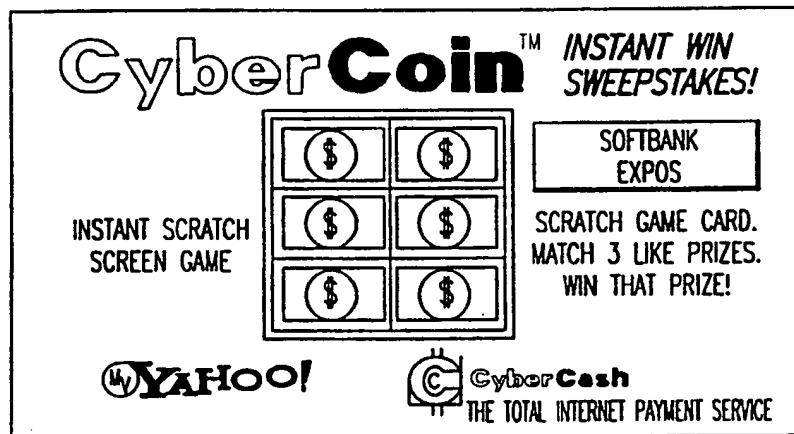
FIG.1B

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CyberCoin™

INSTANT WIN SWEEPSTAKES!

WELCOME TO CYBERCOIN'S INSTANT WIN SWEEPSTAKES, INSTANT SCRATCH SCREEN GAME! THIS IS A FREE CONTEST. WIN UP TO \$10,000.00. VISIT PARTICIPATING CYBERCASH CREDIT OR COIN MERCHANTS TO RECEIVE YOUR FREE GAME PLAY! THE INSTANT SCRATCH SCREEN GAME IS AN EXCITING GAME, AND VERY EASY TO PLAY. YOU SIMPLY SCRATCH-OFF THE GRAPHIC IMAGE TO DISPLAY THE PRIZES. MATCH THREE (3) LIKE PRIZES AND WIN THAT PRIZE. YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO PLAY ONE (1) TIME FOR EACH SUCCESSFUL CYBERCASH CREDIT CARD OR COIN TRANSACTION. IF YOU HAVE THE SOFTWARE ENABLING YOU TO VIEW THE GRAPHIC COVERING, SEE HOW TO PLAY! IF NOT, YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY BE PRESENTED WITH THE COMPLETE GAME CARD AND PRIZES.



(SCROLL DOWN TO PLAY THE GAME!)

WIN UP TO \$500.00 INSTANTLY!

PLUS, YOU CAN WIN UP TO \$10,000.00 IN THE GRAND PRIZE SWEEPSTAKES DRAWING!

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

THE INSTANT WIN GAME & SWEEPSTAKES IS VOID IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC IN CANADA, AND VOID IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA UNTIL NOVEMBER 10, 1996, AND WHERE PROHIBITED BY LAW, RULE, REGULATION OR ORDINANCE.

NOTE: YOUR TRANSACTION MADE AT THE MERCHANT TAKES ABOUT 5 MINUTES TO VERIFY AND PROCESS. YOU MAY ARRIVE BEFORE THE SYSTEM HAS HAD TIME TO COMPLETE THE VERIFICATION PROCESS. IF SO, SIMPLY TRY BACK IN A FEW MINUTES.

FIG.2A

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23
ENTER YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS:

24
ENTER YOUR CYBERCASH WALLET ID:

25
ENTER THE "ORDER NUMBER", LOCATED
IN YOUR CYBERCASH WALLET'S TRANSACTION LOG:

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS. IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO PLAY, SIMPLY SELECT THE "CLEAR SELECTION" BUTTON. THE GAME ENDS AT MIDNIGHT EST, ON DECEMBER 31, 1996 OR UPON THE PLAY OF 40,000 GAME TICKETS WHICHEVER OCCURS FIRST. BY YOUR SELECTION TO AGREE TO PLAY, YOU ARE CERTIFYING THAT YOU ARE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE.

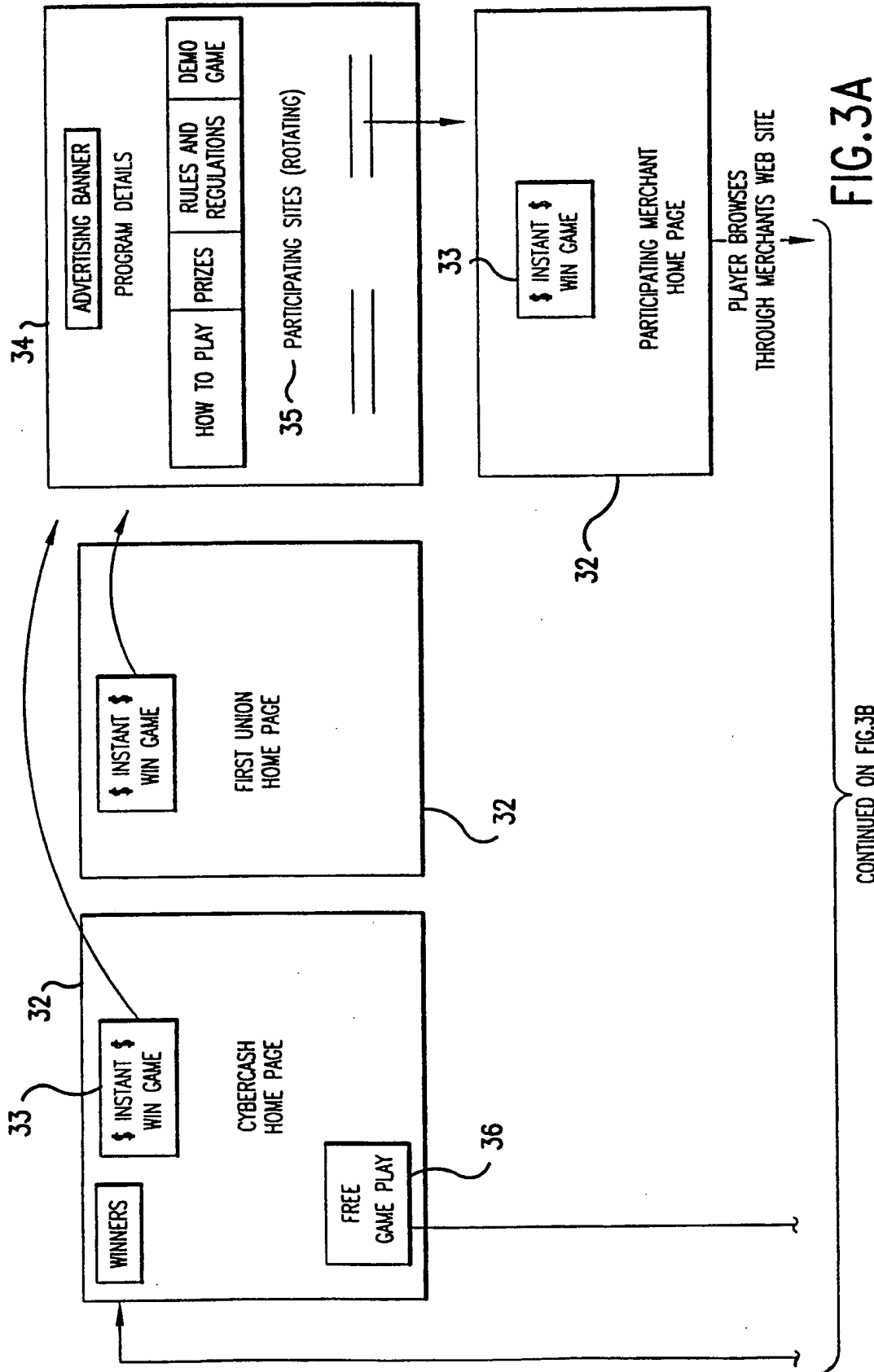
NOTE: PLEASE BE PATIENT WHILE THE SYSTEM PROCESSES YOUR SELECTION! JAVA ENABLED BROWSERS TAKE ABOUT 20 SECONDS TO COMPLETELY DISPLAY YOUR GAME CARD.

[HOW TO PLAY](#) | [PRIZES](#) | [OFFICIAL RULES](#)

ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS: ccpromo@prizes.com.
PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR NAME WITH ALL INQUIRIES

SELECT "BACK" ON YOUR BROWSER TO RETURN TO YOUR POINT OF ENTRY!

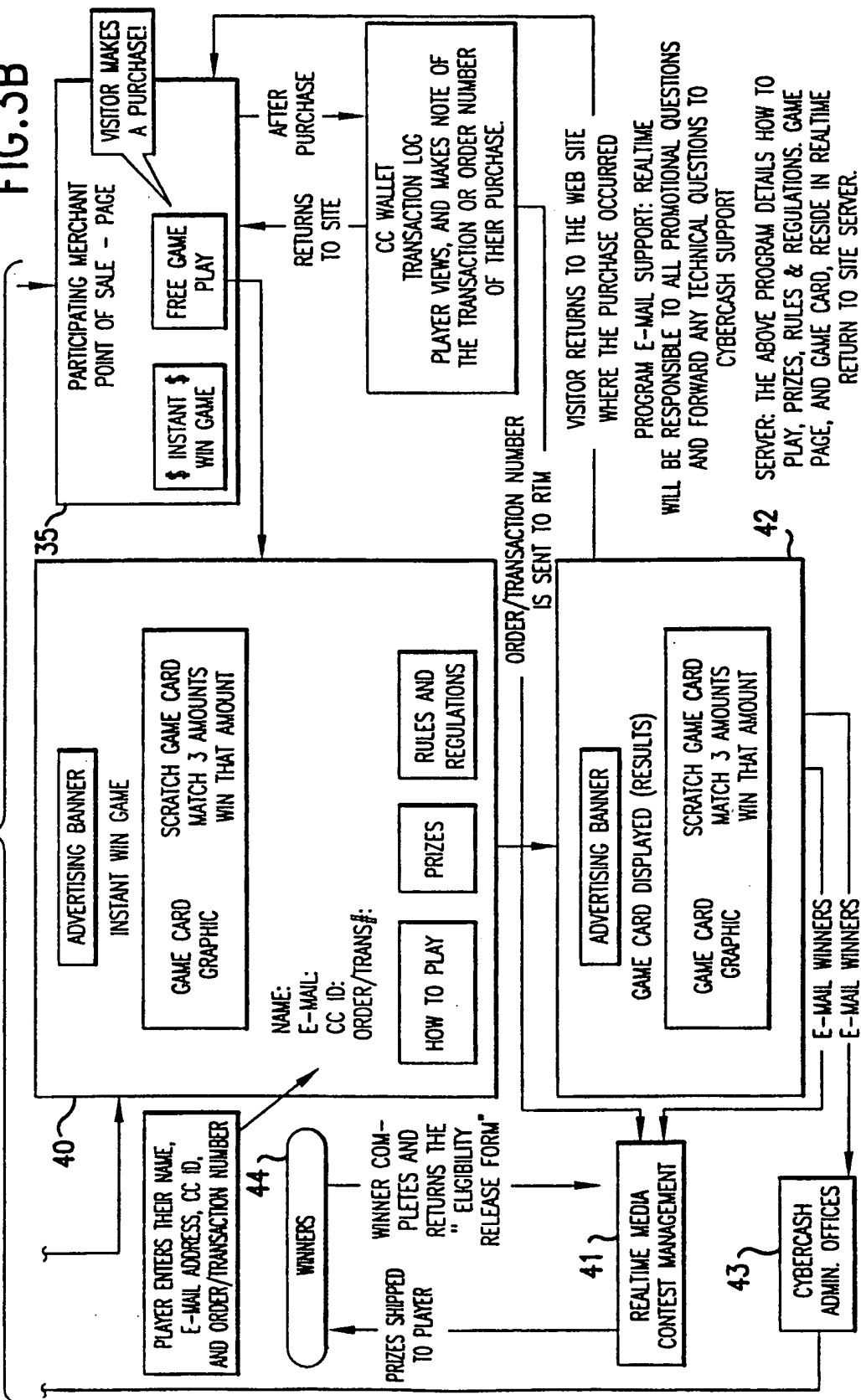
FIG.2B



CONTINUED ON FIG. 3B

FIG. 3B

CONTINUED FROM FIG.3A



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CyberCoin™

INSTANT WIN SWEEPSTAKES!

WELCOME TO CYBERCOIN'S INSTANT WIN SWEEPSTAKES, INSTANT SCRATCH SCREEN GAME! THIS IS A FREE CONTEST. WIN UP TO \$10,000.00. VISIT PARTICIPATING CYBERCASH CREDIT OR COIN MERCHANTS TO RECEIVE YOUR FREE GAME PLAY! THE INSTANT SCRATCH SCREEN GAME IS AN EXCITING GAME, AND VERY EASY TO PLAY. YOU SIMPLY SCRATCH-OFF THE GRAPHIC IMAGE TO DISPLAY THE PRIZES. MATCH THREE (3) LIKE PRIZES AND WIN THAT PRIZE. YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO PLAY ONE (1) TIME FOR EACH SUCCESSFUL CYBERCASH CREDIT CARD OR COIN TRANSACTION. IF YOU HAVE THE SOFTWARE ENABLING YOU TO VIEW THE GRAPHIC COVERING, SEE HOW TO PLAY! IF NOT, YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY BE PRESENTED WITH THE COMPLETE GAME CARD AND PRIZES.

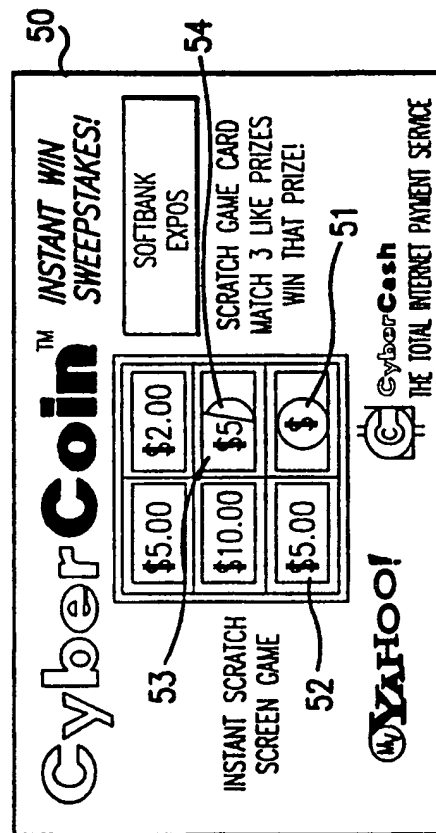


FIG. 4

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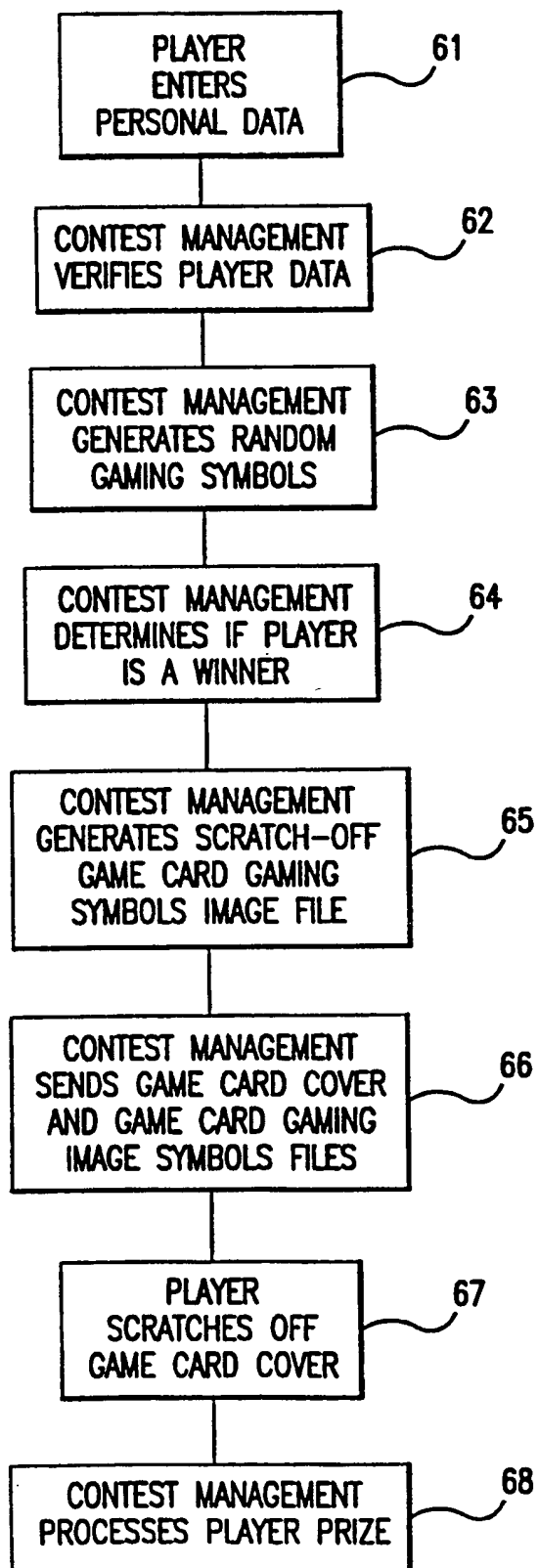


FIG.5

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US98/03145

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) : A63F 3/06

US CL : 273/139, 138.2; 463/42, 16-17, 25, 29, 31; 364/412.1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 273/139, 138.2; 463/42, 16-17, 25, 29, 31; 364/412.1

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

None

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

None

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,118,109 A (GUMINA) 02 June 1992, entire document	1-18

☐

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☐

See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
B earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*A* document member of the same patent family
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

17 MAY 1998

Date of mailing of the international search report

29 MAY 1998

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